

# A MESSAGE TO EMPLOYERS FROM THE PCA WORKFORCE COUNCIL ABOUT THE PCA ORIENTATION PROGRAM

June 29, 2016

The PCA Workforce Council supports your role as a PCA employer, including your right and responsibility to train and supervise your PCA. A few weeks ago we sent you a note informing you about the rollout of a new PCA Orientation Program established by the collective bargaining agreement between the Workforce Council and the union that represents your PCA. This letter provides more detail about the program and how to exercise your option to provide the orientation yourself.

**What is a PCA?** We understand that some people do not identify as a PCA or think of themselves as receiving PCA services. “PCA” means Personal Care Attendant and is used broadly to describe individuals employed by a consumer-employer in various DSS and DDS programs, including: Individual Home Support, Individual Day Support, Personal Support, Personal Care Attendant, Adult Companion, and Respite. In short, if you are receiving this letter, our records indicate that you employ one or more PCAs.

**Who has to complete orientation?** *All* PCAs (broadly defined above) with a hire date on or after January 1, 2015. The orientation requirement applies whether or not the employee has signed a union authorization card.

**When must orientation be complete?** For PCAs hired between 1/1/15 and 7/5/16, **orientation must be complete by October 5, 2016.** A PCA who has not completed orientation by October 5, 2016 cannot work as a PCA until the orientation is complete.

**Does this program affect my service hours or budget?** No. Orientation is conducted during non-service time. The orientation stipend will not reduce your budget or hours of service.

## **Program Overview**

- Orientation is mandatory for PCAs hired on or after January 1, 2015
- The orientation requirement will begin July 5, 2016
- A PCA only needs to complete training once, even if he/she works for multiple employers
- The approved orientation curriculum is available at <http://portal.ct.gov/pcaworkforcecouncil/>
- Orientation takes three hours
- PCAs will be paid \$37.50 for completing orientation
- You have **TWO** choices to help your PCA fulfill his or her orientation requirement:
  - 1) Ask your PCA to enroll in a group orientation session;
  - 2) Provide the orientation yourself (see below)

## **Providing the Orientation Yourself**

- You may choose to provide the orientation yourself. (Note, the orientation must be provided even if your PCA has not signed a union authorization card.) If you choose this option, the following steps apply:
  - 1) Complete the attached Opt-Out Form. **The form must be completed and returned to your fiscal intermediary within 14 days.** You may mail or fax the form. The contact information for your fiscal intermediary is below.

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- 2) Inform your PCA of their requirement to attend the **Union-Only** portion of an orientation group session. Under the collective bargaining agreement between the Workforce Council and the union that represents your PCA, 30 minutes of the orientation covers workers' rights and responsibilities presented by a Union representative. The first 30 minutes of every group session will cover these topics. Registration steps for the Union-Only portion are the same as outlined below.
- 3) Provide the rest of the orientation to your PCA. You must follow the standard curriculum. Orientation must be provided during non-service hours. Your PCA will be paid \$37.50 for completing the full orientation you provide and union-only portion of the orientation group session, which will not be counted against your service budget.
- 4) Once completed, return the enclosed Employer Orientation Certification form. Completing and returning this form promptly will ensure your PCA receives credit for completing orientation and is paid the orientation stipend. **Orientation is not complete until you have returned the Employer Orientation Certification form AND your PCA has attended the union-only session.**

Fiscal Intermediary Contact Information	
<b>Allied Community Resources</b>	<b>Sunset Shores</b>
860-627-5986 (fax)	1-866-380-0149 (fax)
1-877-722-8833 (phone)	1-800-887-0647 (option 1) (phone)

### Group Orientation Sessions

- Group orientation will be conducted by the 1199 New England Health Care Employees Union Training & Upgrading Fund
- Group sessions will be offered throughout the state
- Call 860-804-4869 for information about sessions offered in the following counties:  
**Litchfield, New Haven, Fairfield and New London**
- Call 860-804-4867 for information about sessions offered in the following counties:  
**Hartford, Middlesex, Tolland and Windham**
- General info, call PCA Orientation & Training Coordinator Marie Hu, 860-804-4882
- Information will also be available on the Training & Upgrading Fund's website  
[www.1199trainingfund.org](http://www.1199trainingfund.org)

If you have additional questions, you may contact the PCA Workforce Council:

- Website: <http://portal.ct.gov/pcaworkforcecouncil/>
- Email: [PCAcouncil@ct.gov](mailto:PCAcouncil@ct.gov)
- Phone: 860-418-6370 (please leave a message)

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your understanding as we work to strengthen and improve this critical program. We are interested in your input and you will be hearing from us in a few weeks for your suggestions on the most important training needs for PCAs.